

PRIME FARMLAND
Wells County, North Dakota

Prime farmland is one of several kinds of important farmland defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. It is of major importance in meeting the Nation's short- and long-range needs for food and fiber. Because the supply of high-quality farmland is limited, the U.S. Department of Agriculture recognizes that responsible levels of government, as well as individuals, should encourage and facilitate the wise use of our Nation's prime farmland.

Prime farmland, as defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, is land that has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops and is available for these uses. It could be cultivated land, pastureland, forestland, or other land, but it is not urban or built-up land or water areas. The soil qualities, growing season, and moisture supply are those needed for the soil to economically produce sustained high yields of crops when proper management, including water management, and acceptable farming methods are applied. In general, prime farmland has an adequate and dependable supply of moisture from precipitation or irrigation, a favorable temperature and growing season, acceptable acidity or alkalinity, an acceptable salt and sodium content, and few or no rocks. It is permeable to water and air. It is not excessively erodible or saturated with water for long periods, and it either is not frequently flooded during the growing season or is protected from flooding. Slope ranges mainly from 0 to 6 percent. More detailed information about the criteria for prime farmland is available at the local office of the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

A recent trend in land use in some parts of the survey area has been the loss of some prime farmland to industrial and urban uses. The loss of prime farmland to other uses puts pressure on marginal lands, which generally are more erodible, droughty, and less productive and cannot be easily cultivated.

The map units in the survey area that are considered prime farmland are listed in the following table. This list does not constitute a recommendation for a particular land use. On some soils included in the list, measures that overcome a hazard or limitation, such as flooding, wetness, and droughtiness, are needed. Onsite evaluation is needed to determine whether or not the hazard or limitation has been overcome by corrective measures. The extent of each listed map unit is shown in the "Acres and Proportionate Extent of Soils" table. The location is shown on the detailed soil maps. The soil qualities that affect use and management are described in other tables in this document."

PRIME FARMLAND--Continued
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Map symbol	Mapunit name	Farmland Classification
BnA	Barnes-svea loams, level	All areas are prime farmland
BnB	Barnes-svea loams, undulating	All areas are prime farmland
Bp	Bearden-perella silt loams	All areas are prime farmland
Dd	Divide loam	All areas are prime farmland
EeB	Egeland-embden fine sandy loams, undulating	All areas are prime farmland
EfB	Egeland-embden fine sandy loams, till substratum, undulating	All areas are prime farmland
EgA	Embden-egeland fine sandy loams, level	All areas are prime farmland
ElA	Embden-egeland fine sandy loams, till substratum, level	All areas are prime farmland
FoA	Forman clay loam, nearly level	All areas are prime farmland
FoB	Forman clay loam, undulating	All areas are prime farmland
Fr	Fram loam	All areas are prime farmland
Ge	Gardena-eckman loams	All areas are prime farmland
Ha	Hamerly loam	All areas are prime farmland
HeA	Heimdal-emrick loams, level	All areas are prime farmland
HeB	Heimdal-emrick loams, undulating	All areas are prime farmland
LaA	Ladelle silt loam, level	All areas are prime farmland
LaB	Ladelle silt loam, gently sloping	All areas are prime farmland
Nu	Nutley silty clay	All areas are prime farmland
Ov	Overly silty clay loam	All areas are prime farmland
Br	Benoit loam	Prime farmland if drained
Bu	Borup loam	Prime farmland if drained
Ca	Colvin-lamoure complex	Prime farmland if drained
Cp	Colvin and laprairie soils	Prime farmland if drained
Fc	Fargo silty clay	Prime farmland if drained
To	Tonka silt loam	Prime farmland if drained
Va	Vallers loam	Prime farmland if drained

